Revelation 12

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The entire bible from Genesis to Revelation tells the epic story of the great controversy between Christ & Satan. Humanity plays a central role in that story, but it's not all about us, as we'll see. This conflict is far bigger than humanity.

In this epic story, God is saving us!

Daniel & Revelation are unique in the bible because they paint this incredibly accurate road map of all of prophetic history. And as we'll see, the map follows or highlights specifically God's people in the narrative.

Daniel 2, 7, 9 lays the historical

foundation for the prophetic story of redemption. For the historical timeline of events that unfold in the great controversy.

Daniel 2:20-22

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.

Revelation 12, 13, 14 is particularly unique for us because the narrative of the story clearly moves from the past, to our future. Showing the unfolding of history particularly related to God's people. To You. And revealing events that haven't happened yet. The main

characters in the future are the same from the past, but the scope & scale is far bigger. It's global, universal and cosmic.

Revelation 1:3

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Through these prophecies, the plans for deception Satan has in store for the entire world is what we're particularly interested in knowing.

Honestly, the best Hollywood writers couldn't dream up a story as sweeping and epic as this story found in the Bible, and that we're living right now.

Foretold in the Garden of Eden

Gen 3:15

And I [God] will put enmity [hatred] between you [Satan] and the woman [God's people, or the Church], and between your offspring [Satan's people with Satan as their leader] and hers [God's people with Christ as their leader]; he [Christ] will crush your [Satan's] head, and you [Satan] will strike his [Christ's] heel."

A paraphrase: I, God, will put hatred between Satan and my people, and between Satan's people and my Son; my Son will destroy Satan forever, but not before my Son is wounded in the battle.

Satan has had his people from the beginning – from Cain, to people right up to the end of time.

Revelation 9:20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Matthew 7:13

God also has had His people from the beginning – from Able to people right up to the end of time.

"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed: Revelation 7:3-4

All of the first people and events in the first few chapters of Genesis, are representative (or foreshadow or are types) of the **global conflict** between good and evil at the end of time that we're going to study in Revelation

12-14. The first human family represents the entire human family, and especially the Church family.

The serpent in the garden is **Satan** who "leads the whole world astray" Rev 12:9

Adam and Eve represent how susceptible humans are to sin, and how helpless we are against the power of Satan.

The quarrel between Cain and Abel in Gen 4 is a foreshadow of the persecution of all of God's people, and specifically during the 1260 prophetic years. Cain and Abel were both worshippers. Cain wanted to worship God his way, and Able chose to worship the way God said. That is a critically important principle! Remember this.

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through

which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. Hebrews 11:4

And Able was persecuted (and killed) because of his choice. It's no coincidence that the first murderer came to God as a supposed worshipper.

Titus 1:16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him.

Cain represents the people **opposed to God** *inside the Church*, because Cain
was a supposed worshipper of God.
Able also represents God's people
inside the Church, but those who trust
in God follow his Word, despite the
cost.

And finally, God's providing clothing for Adam and Eve shows God's grace – in spite of our rebellion – and the first sacrifice, pointing to the ultimate sacrifice of His Son so that we could be clothed with His righteousness forever!

There's 4 important principles (pillars) to remember as we study the Great Controversy in Rev 12-14

- There's a real war going on all around us, and it's a spiritual war. This war is being played out throughout all of human history.
- There's only two sides. God's side, or Satan's side.
- 3. Both God and Satan are both working nonstop. God to save us, Satan to cause us to be lost. At the end of the day however, the choice is ours. God respects our freedom of choice above all else.

4. The real issue in this Great Controversy Is Worship, as we'll see.

REVELATION 12 (verse by verse)



Vs 1-5 In the first five verses, we're introduced to the main characters in the Great Controversy – the Church, Christ and Satan.

Vs 1 What would you think a woman

represents in Bible prophecy?

Isaiah 54:5-6

For your Maker is your husband— the Lord Almighty is his name— the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. The Lord will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit— a wife who married young, only to be rejected," says your God.

2 Corinthians 11:2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

A woman when used in the positive sense in Bible prophecy represents God's people, the true Church. Used 8 times in chapter 12 and nowhere else in Revelation.

Isa 54:5-6
5 For your Maker is your husband-- the LORD Almighty is his name-- the Holy One of Israel is yoxur Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth.
6 The LORD will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit-- a wife who married young, only to be rejected," says your God.

2 Cor 11:2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy [Paul says to the NT Chu

jealousy [Paul says to the NT Church]. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

A woman when used in the negative sense in Bible prophecy represents the false church – or a false way of religion, or opposition to God. Used 6 times in chapter 17 and nowhere else in Revelation. There is a clear contrast being established between God's

people and the world.

Revelation 17:1-2

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

God has always had people who trusted only in Him, and who He called His people – a thread of people throughout time - a remnant. In the OT that group of people was a sovereign nation, Israel – however only those who believed and trusted in God were His people, were the remnant.

Galatians 3:7
Therefore know that only those who are

of faith are sons of Abraham.

Romans 9:8

That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

And so after Christ, after the cross, God's people have endured as the **Church**.

Galatians 3:28-29

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The nation of **Israel** has no more part to play in God's plan of redemption, or in end time events in any way. Like we saw in the Dan 9 time prophecy, their

mission has been given to the Church.

Matthew 23:37-38

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate;

Matthew 21:43

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you (national Israel) and given to a nation (the Church) bearing the fruits of it.

Parable of the Vineyard found in Matt 21:33-46 also teaches this principle.

The **clothing of the sun** represents – Christ is our Light, for instance. The righteousness of Christ covering our sinfulness, for another.

John 8:12 Jesus said,
"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Gal 3:27

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

1Thes 5:5

You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

Isaiah 61:10

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,

The moon, on which the woman is

standing represents our victory over the world through the power of Christ, perhaps. There could be other explanations.

Gal 6:14

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

The **crown of twelve stars** represents God's redeemed people, and specifically the number twelve points to the 12 tribes of Israel and/or the 12 apostles as first fruits representing all who will be redeemed. As before in Rev 1, the seven stars represent seven messengers to be sent to the seven churches.

Rev 1:20

The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven

golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Vs 3 What would you think a dragon represents in Bible prophecy? It is interpreted in verse 9 to be Satan. But there's more to it than that, as we'll see.

Seven heads, ten horns, seven crowns – see Rev 17:9-10

Vs 4 This part of the verse refers to Satan deceiving 1/3 of the angels in heaven, and them being expelled from heaven to this earth.

John 16:11
Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

The Great Controversy

War in heaven. War is the last thing we think of when we think of heaven! But it happened.

At the National Memorial held on the Friday after 911, Billy Graham, on Sept 14, 2001, said, "I've been asked hundreds of times in my life why God allows tragedy and suffering. I have to confess that I really do not know the answer totally, even to my own satisfaction..."

The Bible absolutely provides a true and reasonable **answer** to this question. It also answers basic questions that most people want to know,

- ○ What's the purpose of life, my life?
- Why do bad things happen to good people?

 \equiv O Where is God in the pain?

The Bible paints a very clear picture of God, of his character. And the extent to which He will go to save us, and fight for us.

Also we see the power of the Enemy opposed to us. The mess we're in.

All of this and more is unfolded in Bible prophecy.

There's a war going on, I think we all know it. An epic battle, with the future of the universe for all of eternity in the balance. The stakes couldn't be higher!

And it's a spiritual battle.

Ephesians 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this

dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Skip to verses 7-9



Lucifer was the highest angel in heaven. He had it all. The adoration and respect of the other angels. Emmence responsibility. And direct access to God.

But somewhere along the way, **sin was found in his heart.** He wanted God's throne. More importantly, he wanted the

worship that can only belongs to God.

Ezekiel 28:15

You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

Isaiah 14:13-14

For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'

And so Lucifer and his angels were **banished** from heaven.

2 Corinthians 6:14
For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

Why didn't God just destroy Lucifer? Make an example out of him in front of the entire watching universe and all the angels. And end the rebellion right then and there?

The answer to this question is at the heart of the Great Controversy.

God respects our freedom of choice above all else.

God had to find a way to PROVE that Lucifer's accusations again Him were false. Nothing makes a lasting impression like something being demonstrated.

So Lucifer and his fallen angels were allowed to try things **their way,** and see how things work out.

With the entire unfallen universe watching, Satan's accusations again

God will either be **proven true or false.**God's character, His government and
His worthiness of our worship are all at
stake in this Great Controversy that you
are a part of.

And so Satan came to this newly created earth, with his sights set on Adam and Eve.

If you think about it, it's really all about Worship. Lucifer wanted the worship that only God is entitled to! And so beginning in the Garden of Eden, he began his deception of mankind, leading Adam and Eve away from a genuine relationship with God, and hence, away from true worship. The very first thing the serpent said to Eve in Gen 3:1 was "Did God really say...?"

And ever since Satan has been using this same tactic.. undermining the **Word of God**, the Bible. Making us believe that

God's Word, His Commandments, and even God's clear way He wants us to worship, is arbitrary, and unimportant.

Just chose the way YOU want to worship, and that will be fine, Satan would have us believe. And this issue gets to the very heart of the Great Controversy.. who, how, why and even when do we worship? Do we worship God's way? Or our own way, the world's way, man's way?

6000 years and counting, with this earth as the showcase... we have the misery, pain, suffering and death of Satan's way... **telling us all we need to know.** God's point is proven through this earth's history, and through each of our lives.

YOUR **changed life** will prove to the universe that God's way IS the right way. And never will sin rise again.. Because

we have learned the lesson.

Ezekiel 36:26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Back to our story of Bible prophecy unfolding throughout history in Rev 12,

Vs 4 Now here's an example of how the narrative goes way back to before the beginning of the earth, and then flashes forward to the birth of the Messiah.

The second part of the verse refers to Satan's attempt to kill Jesus through the Romans. Matt 2:13

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

Vs 5 This is the birth of Christ.

Matt 1:23

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"-- which means, "God with us."

But the **symbolism** goes beyond Mary of course, and points to the church, or God's faithful people. Remember a woman in bible prophecy represents the **church**.

The woman who gave birth to the

Messiah represents God's people. In the OT this group of people were called the Jews. In the NT they are called Christians. Whatever the label, and whatever the time in history, God has always had a faithful people. **This is the remnant.** It run like a tread through the whole Bible.

Specifically, this verse is referring to the NT Church – God's people. Christ established the Church, He gave His life for the Church, He is the head of the Church and He is coming back for the Church. The Church finds all of its meaning and purpose in Christ.

Rev 12:5

She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.

The last part of the verse refers to the

resurrection of Jesus,

Mark 16:19

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

Vs 6 Now the narrative flashes forward in time to the Middle Ages, to the persecution of God's people, to the 1260 years. Go down a few verses,

Rev 12:14

14 The woman [representing God's people] was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.

Again we see the narrative flashing forward in time from the resurrection of Jesus to this same period of time in

history, to the 1260 prophetic years. Compare with,

Dan 7:25

He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints [God's people] will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.

"a year, two years and a half a year" = 3-1/2 years x 12 months = 42 months x 30 days/month = 1260 days. Using the Day for a Year principle we established in the 490 day-year prophecy, predicting the coming of the Messiah in Dan 9 = 1260 prophetic years.

This period of time is mentioned 7 times in the Bible,

Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7, Rev 11:2, Rev 11:3, Rev 12:6, Rev 12:14, Rev 13:5

Notice that in all cases it's talking about God's people being **persecuted.** And in all of these cases it is referring to the same period of time, the Middle Ages. Did anything of significance happen to the Catholic Church during this time period?

In 538 AD the Roman ruler Justinian established the Roman bishop as head over all Christian churches, therefore establishing the papacy. Exactly 1260 years later, in the autumn of 1798, Napoleon's forces (under French general Berthier) captured Rome, and sent pope Pius IV into exile, thereby ending the papacy for a decade or more, and putting an end to the era of "papal supremacy". This is the **deadly wound** that was healed in Rev 13.3

1260 years of persecution

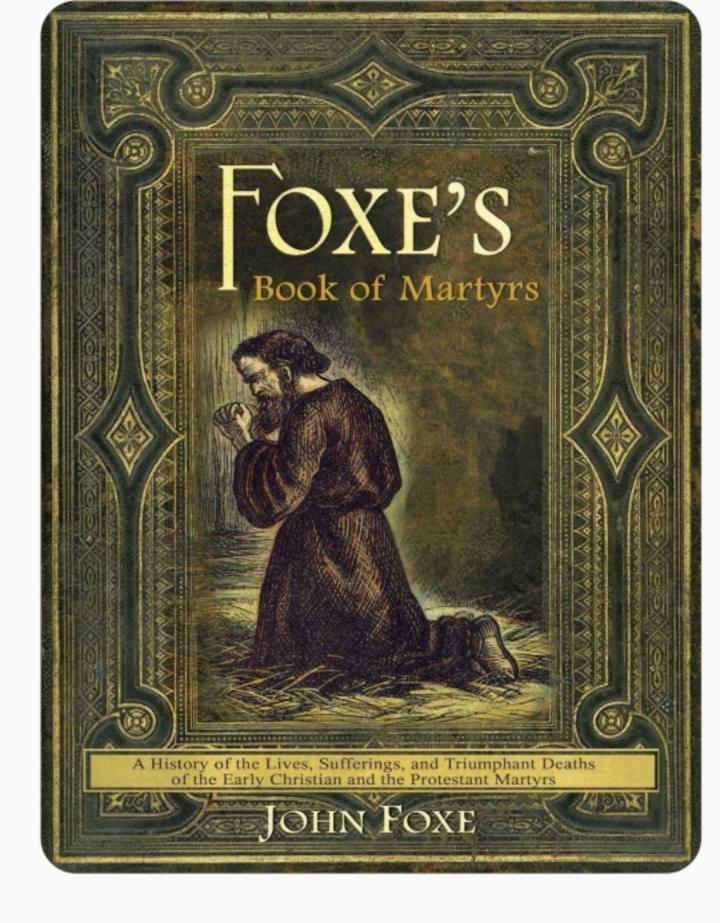
The woman, representing God's true church, fled to the desert. She fled because she was being pursued and persecuted by the very Church that claimed to represent Christ. The desert (or the earth) represents literal places of safety or refuge on the earth, sparsely populated. It is reminiscent of Israel's escape from the Egyptians into the desert where God protected them as well. God always protects and preserves His people and the truth.

Notice that it implies that God prepared a place for His people in advance of the 1260 years. God knew this was coming and had a **plan in place** for protecting His people. The Catholic Church's use of intimidation and violence through the armies of the nations of Europe during the Middle Ages is well documented. Countless Crusades and the Inquisitions were conducted to advance the "truth" and stamp out heresy.

Satan's goal in the Great Controversy is to destroy God's Church. If he can't do it through persecution (he tried for the first 3 centuries), he would have to find another means – **if you can't beat'm, join'm.** If he can't destroy us from the outside, he'll do it from the inside.

Examples from history

FOX'S BOOK OF MARTYRS



CHAPTER V

An Account of the Inquisition

"Yet, even in Spain, thus gleaned of all heresy, the Inquisition could still swell its lists of murders to thirty-two thousand! The numbers burned in effigy, or condemned to penance, punishments generally equivalent to exile, confiscation, and taint of blood, to all ruin but the mere loss of worthless life, amounted to three hundred and nine thousand. But the crowds who perished in dungeons of torture, of confinement, and of broken hearts, the millions of dependent lives made utterly helpless, or hurried to the grave by the death of the victims, are beyond all register; or recorded only before HIM"

From a news article March 13, 2000

The pope's "Day of Pardon" mass was designed, in the Vatican's words, to ask forgiveness for the past and present

sins of the Church. Pope John Paul II wanted Catholics to reexamine their consciences in the new millennium. His homily did not single out specific periods or groups in history but a plea to forgive the use of violence in the service of truth was a subtle reference to the brutal excesses of the Crusades and the Inquisitions during the Middle Ages.

Vs 7-9 The story now flashes backward in time to the cause of all our troubles. The angel Lucifer rebels against God and is kicked out of heaven, but not before there's a war in heaven and 1/3 of the angels are deceived and are also thrown out.

Vs 10 Fast forward to what event? The cross. "Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ"

In verse 9 Satan is hurled down out of heaven. In verse 10 he's also hurled down by what Christ did on the cross. Satan mistakenly thought that by humiliating Christ and through Rome executing Him as a criminal, he would get rid of Jesus and the problem. But he was very wrong. It backfired on him.

Col 2:15

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

And then Satan will be "hurled down" one final time at the end and destroyed for good.

Rev 20:10

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and

night forever and ever.

Vs 11 And then we move forward from the cross and this one verse gives testimony to all of God's people who will be persecuted for their faith – their faith and their lives are their testimony. Beginning with the apostles... and continuing through the prophetic 1260 years of persecution of God's faithful people... and ending with Satan's last ditch end time tribulation effort to destroy God's people and the truth.

And this verse is linked to the fifth seal

Rev 6:9

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.

Rev 12:11

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

The 7 Seals found in Rev 6 progress historically, like all of bible prophecy. The fifth seal corresponds to the specific time period of papal persecution – the 1260 years.

Vs 12 This verse shows Satan's fury and hatred for God and His people. I like the contrast in this verse.

Vs 13 Like verse 11, the story moves forward from the cross. Satan sees that His plan to destroy the Messiah by killing Him has backfired, so He does the only thing he can do – he pursues and persecutes the people who love God with all their heart, the True Church. And he does it through a most unexpected means – through their

supposed own people – the False Church, the Harlot of Rev 17. From within.



The Roman Catholic Church, during the height of her power during the **1260 year** period of persecution, had in effect turned the pure, simple, religion of the first century church, into a religious institution full of pride, ritual and power. The disciples and apostles would not have recognized the church at all. In a few short verses in the book of Acts.

Acts 2:40-47

40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47

praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Here's what Jesus thought about man made traditions.

Mark 7:6-10

6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written:

'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 7 And in vain they worship Me,

Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men — the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do."

9 He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. Vs 14 The divine protection of the truth is so important, that it's actually mentioned twice in the narrative of Rev 12. Notice that the humans that persecute God's people are doing so on behalf of the serpent, or Satan.

Again as in verse 6, the desert represents unpopulated places of safety where God's people fled during this time of intense persecution. The Waldensians for instance, living high in the Alps. Or those faithful Christians who fled to the plains of Africa or the New World to escape religious persecution. The phrase "two wings of an eagle" is reminiscent of the OT.

Exodus 19:3-4

3 Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to

tell the people of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did

to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

Vs 15-16 Typically water represents peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.

Rev 17:15

Then the angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages."

The water mentioned here could be symbolic of the armies that at times were commissioned by the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages to carry out its persecution of the God's people.

The **earth** would then be literal and would be the places on the earth where

God's faithful people relocated – out of the reach of Satan's persecution. The truth was preserved.

Vs 17 Now we flash forward from the end of the Middle Ages to the Great Tribulation at the end of time. Satan is furious that he can't destroy God's true church during the time God has allowed him. So he makes one last ditch effort to destroy God's true church, or the remnant (KJV), during the end-time tribulation.

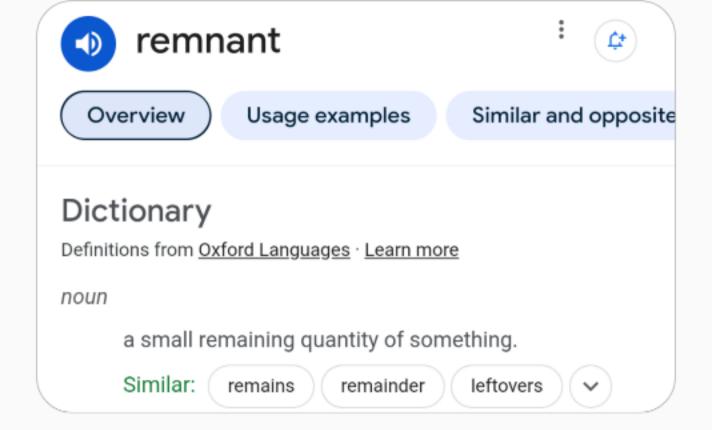
If the woman represents God's people and His truth preserved and protected during the prophetic 1260 years (during Middle Ages), then it would stand to reason that **her offspring** would come after her – after the end of the 1260 years, or after the year 1798.

KJV uses the phrase **remnant of her seed.** Still translated correctly as her

offspring, but adding the word remnant – meaning an exact copy of the original in practice and doctrine, and relatively small in number.

Now we have some **identifiers** of God's end time remnant people, God's end time remnant church,

- They emerge after 1798.. hence, remnant of her seed.
- They are an exact copy of the original in practice and doctrine. Remnant of a bolt of cloth.
- They are relatively small in number. Again remnant "remaining ones"



- They keep the commandments of God, the Ten Commandments as a people (Ex 20) Especially including the 4th commandment. See Rev 12.17, 14.12, 1 Jn 5.1
- They have the testimony of Jesus Christ, which means God has given them a true prophet.

Revelation 19:10 KJV And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the **spirit of prophecy**.

- ○ They have to be a global movement. Rev 14.6 vs 13.12
- They preach the everlasting gospel.. Salvation by faith alone through Christ

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

And finally,

They teach correct biblical doctrine, and especially the truth about Babylon and

the mark of the beast. The third angel's message is taught publically, globally and unashamedly!

Who is it? !?